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DRAFTED BY NEA:HHSANDERS:HE

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS NIACT IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, US

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT ASAD

REF: DAMASCUS 2707

1. YOU SHOULD ASK TO SEE ASAD PERSONALLY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO MAKE POINTS BELOW ORALLY WITH REGARD TO POSSIBLE MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENTS FORD AND ASAD. FACE-TO-FACE PRESENTATION IMPORTANT TO ALLOW YOU TO GET FIRSTHAND SENSE OF ASAD'S RESPONSE AND TO ASSURE THAT OUR PRESENTATION IS MADE WITH TONE WE INTEND.

2. PRESIDENT FORD WILL BE VISITING EUROPE JULY 26 TO AUGUST 4 TO ATTEND EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE AND TO HOLD SEVERAL OTHER VERY BRIEF MEETINGS TO WHICH HE HAS LONG BEEN COMMITTED.

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3. IN LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS TRIP, PRESIDENT HAS HAD VERY MUCH IN MIND OUR SUGGESTION THAT HE AND PRESIDENT ASAD MEET DURING PRESIDENT'S NEXT TRIP TO EUROPE AND WANTS YOU TO DISCUSS WITH HIM CONSIDERATIONS IN ARRANGING SUCH A MEETING.

4. WE REGRET THAT TIME IS SO SHORT FOR DISCUSSING SUCH A

MEETING. BECAUSE OF DELAYS IN REACHING AGREEMENT ON TIMING OF EUROPEAN CONFERENCE, IT IS ONLY NOW THAT THIS SCHEDULE HAS BECOME FIRM.

5. IF A MEETING WERE TO TAKE PLACE, FROM POINT OF VIEW OF PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE IT WOULD HAVE TO BE AT BEGINNING OF PRESIDENT'S TRIP BECAUSE OF VISIT BY JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER TO U.S. SCHEDULED AUGUST 5-6 IMMEDIATELY AFTER PRESIDENT'S RETURN. WE HAVE DISCUSSED WITH JAPANESE POSSIBILITY OF SLIGHT POSTPONEMENT BUT THAT NOT POSSIBLE FOR THEM BECAUSE OF THEIR COMMITMENTS.

6. IF PRESIDENT ASAD FELT IT HIGHLY DESIRABLE AND IF HE WERE ABLE ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE, PRESIDENT WOULD BE PLEASED TO APPROACH GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRIA TO SEE WHETHER IT WOULD HOST MEETING ON SATURDAY JULY 26. HOWEVER, WE FULLY AWARE COMPLICATIONS THIS TIMING MAY CAUSE PRESIDENT ASAD AND DIFFICULTY OF MAKING ARRANGEMENTS IN SUCH SHORT TIME, AND WE WILL UNDERSTAND IF HE WOULD PREFER TO SEEK LATER OPPORTUNITY FOR MEETING.

7. IN THAT CONNECTION, IT OCCURS TO US THAT PRESIDENT ASAD, LIKE SOME OTHER HEADS OF STATE, MAY BE PLANNING TO ATTEND SPECIAL SESSION OF UNGA. IF THAT WERE THE CASE, PRESIDENT FORD WOULD BE PLEASED TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT ASAD EITHER IN WASHINGTON OR NEW YORK.

8. PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF MEETING AT THIS POINT WOULD BE FOR TWO PRESIDENTS TO MEET AND TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON STRATEGY FOR MOVING FURTHER TOWARD PEACE. NEGOTIATING SITUATION REMAINS AS DESCRIBED IN SECRETARY'S RECENT MESSAGES AND GENERAL U.S. STRATEGY REMAINS AS SECRETARY
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DISCUSSED IN HIS MOST RECENT TALKS WITH PRESIDENT ASAD.

9. FYI: BECAUSE OF SHORTNESS OF TIME IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE EARLIEST POSSIBLE RESPONSE. ALTHOUGH THIS NOT BEST TIME FOR MEETING AND IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO ARRANGE ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE, YOU ARE TO PRESENT THIS SO ASAD FEELS HE IS BEING GIVEN GENUINE CHOICE. HOWEVER, WE BASICALLY PREFER SEPTEMBER PROPOSAL. END FYI.

10. YOU WILL NOT WANT TO RAISE SUBJECT OF NEGOTIATIONS BUT, IF IT COMES UP, YOU MAY SAY THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER HAS HAD FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH ISRAELI AMBASSADOR FOLLOWING HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON FROM ISRAEL, AND AMBASSADOR EILTS HAS BEEN BRIEFED ON THE LATEST ISRAELI POSITION. THERE IS STILL NOTHING DEFINITIVE TO REPORT ON THE COURSE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE SECRETARY WILL REPORT FURTHER AS THE SITUATION WARRANTS.

11. IF THE SUBJECT OF EGYPT'S ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE EXTENSION OF THE UNEF MANDATE COMES UP, YOU SHOULD SAY SIMPLY THAT WE ARE WORKING AT UN TO SEE WHETHER WAY CAN BE FOUND TO HAVE UNEF MANDATE EXTENDED.

12. WE AGREE THAT, IF THE OCCASION PRESENTS ITSELF, YOU SHOULD EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION FOR SYRIAN EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF COLONEL MORGAN. KISSINGER

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